

Application No. 10/624,575
 Amendment dated November 3, 2005
 Reply to Office Action mailed June 10, 2005

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application in light of the present amendment and remarks is respectfully requested. In the present response, claim 15 has been canceled, and claims 16-18 have been amended. Claims 16-18 remain pending in this application.

Applicant respectfully requests entry of the present amendment, under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.113 and 37 CFR 1.116 (governing amendments submitted after a Final Rejection), on the grounds that this amendment: (i) cancels all rejected claims (i.e., claim 15); (ii) places the remaining claims (i.e., claims 16-18, which have been indicated as having allowable subject matter) in a condition for immediate allowance; and (iii) raises no new issues with respect to the remaining claims.

Substantive matters

Claim 15 has been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Fischer (U.S. Patent 6,246,173). In response, Applicant has canceled claim 15.

Claims 16-18 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but have been indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicant has amended claims 16-18 in accordance with Examiner's suggestions. More specifically:

(i) Claims 16 and 17 have each been recast in independent form to include all limitations of base claim 15; and

(ii) Claim 18 has been recast in independent form to include all limitations of base claim 15 and intervening claim 17.

Accordingly, claims 16-18 are now in a condition for allowance.

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16. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit of claim 15, further comprising:~~ A circuit for operating a discharge lamp (LA), the circuit comprising:

an inverter (T1,T2) for supplying the lamp with alternating current, the inverter having an operating frequency, the inverter comprising:

at least one transistor switching unit (T2) having a gate; and

a current limiting device (T3,D1,D2,D3,C3) coupled to the gate of the at least one transistor switching unit (T2), wherein the current limiting device is operable to switch the at least one transistor unit on and off as a function of a current flowing through the at least one transistor unit;

a load circuit (L1-A,C1,C2) connected between the inverter and the lamp, the load circuit having a resonant frequency; and

a phase setting device (R2,C2,L2) connected to the gate of the at least one transistor switching unit (T2), the phase setting device being operable to match the operating frequency of the inverter to the resonant frequency of the load circuit.

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17. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit of claim 15.~~ A circuit for operating a discharge lamp (LA), the circuit comprising:

an inverter (T1,T2) for supplying the lamp with alternating current, the inverter having an operating frequency, the inverter comprising:

at least one transistor switching unit (T2) having a gate; and

a current limiting device (T3,D1,D2,D3,C3) coupled to the gate of the at least one transistor switching unit (T2), wherein the current limiting device is operable to switch the at least one transistor unit on and off as a function of a current flowing through the at least one transistor unit; and

wherein:

the at least one transistor switching unit (T2) is connected to ground via a first resistor (R1); and

the current limiting device comprises:

a switching device (T3) having a base, an emitter, and a collector, wherein the emitter is connected to ground;

a capacitor (C3) coupled between the base of the switching device (T3) and ground;

a first zener diode (D1) coupled between the first resistor (R1) and the base of the switching device (T3);

a second zener diode (D2) coupled between the collector of the switching device (T3) and ground; and

a third zener diode (D3) coupled between the gate of the at least one transistor switching unit (T2) and the collector of the switching device (T3).

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18. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit of claim 17, further comprising:~~ A circuit for operating a discharge lamp (LA), the circuit comprising:

an inverter (T1,T2) for supplying the lamp with alternating current, the inverter having an operating frequency, the inverter comprising:

at least one transistor switching unit (T2) having a gate; and

a current limiting device (T3,D1,D2,D3,C3) coupled to the gate of the at least one transistor switching unit (T2), wherein the current limiting device is operable to switch the at least one transistor unit on and off as a function of a current flowing through the at least one transistor unit; and

wherein:

the at least one transistor switching unit (T2) is connected to ground via a first resistor (R1); and

the current limiting device comprises:

a switching device (T3) having a base, an emitter, and a collector, wherein the emitter is connected to ground;

a capacitor (C3) coupled between the base of the switching device (T3) and ground;

a first zener diode (D1) coupled between the first resistor (R1) and the base of the switching device (T3);

a second zener diode (D2) coupled between the collector of the switching device (T3) and ground; and

a third zener diode (D3) coupled between the gate of the at least one transistor switching unit (T2) and the collector of the switching device (T3);

a load circuit (L1-A,C1,C2) connected between the inverter and the lamp, the load circuit having a resonant frequency; and

a phase setting device (R2,C2,L2) connected to the gate of the at least one transistor switching unit (T2), the phase setting device being operable to match the operating frequency of the inverter to the resonant frequency of the load circuit.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, passing of this case is now in order.
Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's agent by telephone if such communication may be helpful in the further examination of this case. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to:

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P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

On November 3, 2005
(Date of Deposit)

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Kenneth D. Labudda 11/03/2005
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Respectfully submitted,

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